

Sri Kurma Ksetra

Near Srikakulam



Kurma avatar: The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna incarnated as a tortoise and held the great Mandara Mountain upon His back to be used as a pivot for churning the ocean of milk.

Sri Kurma Ksetra is an ancient and very important temple of Sri Kurmadeva, the second incarnation of Lord Sri Krishna. Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu visited this temple in year 1510 during His tour to South India. The famous pastime related to leper Vasudeva took place here, when Lord Caitanya touched the leper Vasudeva, both his leprosy and his distress went far away. [Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya lila chapter 7, 113-152] Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura established the Lotus Footprints of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu at the temple in 1930s. Srimad-Bhagavatam Canto 8 chapter 5 to 8 describe the appearance of Sri Kurma avatar. Sri Kurmadeva protects the stability and the foundation of devotee's vows.

Appearance of Sri Kurma at Sri Kurmum

by His Holiness Radhanath Swami, South India Yatra 1999

According to the *Mahatmya* of this place, it is described that Srila Vedavyasa was telling one great muni that this place of Kurma Ksetra is very, very sacred and he told the story of this temple. There is a mountain called *Shwetacala Parvat*. And near that mountain lived a king. His name was Shweta Chakravarti, and his wife's name was Vishnupriya. Vishnupriya was very chaste, very pure in heart, and had great devotion to Lord Krishna. On an Ekadasi day she was performing *puja* in her temple room. At that time her husband had very great lusty desires. He went to her room to enjoy his lusty desires with his wife. So being a chaste woman she greeted him with great hospitality, had him sit on a golden throne. Then, she went back into her *puja* room to continue her devotional service. She

started to pray very helplessly to Vishnu that *today is Ekadasi, I have made vow that I will not engage in any type of sinful activity. I will completely immerse my mind only in devotional service. But my husband is approaching me with lusty desires. Please save me, please protect my vows to you on this holy Ekadasi day.*

This is a great lesson for any of the ladies whoever get put in this situation. The Lord always protects His devotees. As she prayed to Lord Vishnu, Kurmadeva who protects the stability and the foundation of devotee's vows, He ordered Gangadevi that this king wants to violate the chastity of the vows of my devotee, go stop him. So Gangadevi appeared in the temple and then with a terrible, terrible violent current, she came flowing out of the temple room, and right after King Shweta Chakravarti. When he saw the river Ganges just flooding forward, rushing towards him, he became very frightened and ran away. He was running and running and running but everywhere he went, the Ganges was chasing after. He was running, running, but it was chasing after and finally he climbed to the top of the Shweta mountain. And there he asked his minister what's happening? Why? His chief minister told him, that your wife is a very great devotee of Lord Vishnu, and you had lusty desires for her on Ekadasi. She prayed to Vishnu to save her, and Kurmadeva, just to protect His devotee send the river Ganges, just to stop you.

When the king heard this he felt so guilty, terrible, he was thinking that I am such a sinful person. He began to repent, but worse than that, he was thinking that I made an offense to my wife, and what kind of great devotee is she, that Lord Kurmadeva personally arranged to protect her? He decided, he had to perform great, great *tapasya* to purify himself from this offense. So he was repenting so much. He was just getting down on himself so bad, and finally he fell unconscious. Then Narada Muni appeared. Narada Muni said, *"How can I serve you?"* He said, *"Please grant me a benediction, grant me the benediction that I can have darshan of the great deity of Kurmadeva."* So Narada Muni taught him a *Kurma Mantra* and sat on the shores of the ocean of the sea and explained him the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness very nicely.

As he was chanting this *mantra*, Lord Siva appeared and then he was even more encouraged. So he came to a place called *Chakra tirtha* which is in the area of Kurma Ksetra, and there Shweta Chakravarti for 300 years stood on one toe with his arms raised. Then during the summer, he stood in the centre of a burning hot fire. In the rainy season, he stood in the rains and the cold. Then he started sitting on knives for a long time. Finally his body was so completely exhausted because of this *tapasya* that he fell down. At that point Narada Muni saw, how serious he was, because Narada Muni was standing next to him. And he prayed to Lord Vishnu: *"Please come and give him your darshan."*

Upon the request of Narada Muni, this great king received the holy *darshan* of Lord Kurmadeva, who stood before him with four arms. They went to one *Rishi's* house together, Narada Muni, Kurmadev and the king. And the *rishi* was so happy, *"Because of you King I am getting the darshan of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."* So the king was getting so many auspicious blessings. They came to this place. Actually the king was still was so tired, and they were climbing this high mountain. Kurmadeva was so pleased by the king's endeavours to try to serve Him and please Him that He chanted the mantra 'Om' and immediately the mountain became flat. They came to Chakra tirtha and the king said, *"I want to make a nice kunda to bathe in."* The kund is very close by here, and with His chakra Kurmadev made a beautiful kunda.

From the place where the chakra entered the ground, *Maha Laxmi* came out. *Maha Laxmi* said to the Lord, *"What are You doing in this crazy world where people are so sinful, addicted to intoxications and so many materialistic activities? What are You doing here?"* Then the Supreme Personality of Godhead said, *"Wherever My devotees are serving Me I*

want to be with them. My life is to give favour to My devotees." So it is a beautiful story that Kurmadev appeared here, on this place.

And Narada Muni and the king decided that they wanted to have installation for the Kurma deity. So they went to *Brahma loka*, because the king asked, "Do you know the mantras to install the deity of Kurma?" and Narada said, "Lord Brahma knows the mantra. Let us go." So they went to the abode of Lord Brahma and Lord Brahma said, "I will come down and I will personally install this deity." And while he came, Lord Siva came, Lord Indra came, Vayu came, Agnidev came and Surya came. All the principal gods, they all came to this place and Lord Brahma performed the glorious installation ceremony of Sri Kurmadev and from that time this has been one of the great holy places of pilgrimage for Vaishnavas.

Pastime with Sripad Ramanujacarya

In fact Sripad Ramanujacarya, he visited Jagannatha Puri. And when he saw the way the *pujaris* were worshipping the deity, he was thinking that it was not correct. He explained to them what are the rules and regulations according to *Pancaratrika Vidhi*. They were doing different *Tantra-Mantra-Yantras* and other traditional ways. So that night after he instructed them, Lord Jagannatha appeared to Ramanujacarya in his dream, right there in Puri and told him, "I am very satisfied with the love and devotion in which my *pujaris* are worshipping Me. I don't want you to change it." And therefore that night Lord Jagannatha personally threw Ramanujacarya to *Kurma Ksetra*. But according to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, first Lord Jagannatha threw him to Navadvipa. He was thrown to Navadvipa and there he had *darshan* of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave him very wonderful *darshan* and instructions of how to go on with the particular devotional service of establishing the *Vishishta Dvaita* philosophy, *Siddhanta*. In this way Jagannatha took him from Puri to Navadvipa, and then to Kurma Ksetra.

So when Ramanujacarya woke up, here he was in front of the deity of Kurmadeva. He thought, it was the deity of Siva because you have all seen the *darshan*; He would look like a *Siva lingam*. When Ramanujacarya was thinking, he was Lord Siva in great gravity of devotion, he began to fast. But then he recognised that there was a head and a tail, little feet. It was Kurmadeva. It was Vishnu. So he established very gorgeous worship of the deity, and sent his own disciples and followers here to maintain a very high standard of worship, to this very day. When Ramanujacarya was here, he installed next to the deity of Kurmadeva, the deity of Sridevi and Bhudevi.

When Sripad Madhvacarya came here in his pilgrimage he worshiped Kurmadeva and he installed these deities of Sri Sri Sita Ram inside. And Sripad Shankaracharya when he came here to worship the deity, he also installed a deity of *Sudarshan Chakra*. And when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came here, He also installed the congregational chanting of the Holy Names: *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*. The supreme most accessible deity, in this age of Kali-yuga. So we are very, very grateful and fortunate to be here today.



Way to Sri Kurmum Temple at Kurma Ksetra



Sri Kurmadeva Temple at Kurma Ksetra



Sri Kurmadeva Temple



Sri Maha Laxmi Devi and Sri Kurmadeva at Kurma Ksetra



Sri Kurmadeva at Kurma Ksetra



Sri Kurmadeva



Kurma, The Tortoise Incarnation



Kurma, The Tortoise Incarnation

The Supreme Personality of Godhead incarnated as a tortoise and held the great Mandara Mountain upon His back to be used as a pivot for churning the ocean of milk.



Sri Kurmadeva Temple

పశ్చిమ ధ్వజ స్తంభము

11వ శతాబ్దములో భగవద్రామానుజాచార్యులు ఈ రెండవ ధ్వజ స్తంభము ఉన్న ప్రదేశమున శ్రీ మహా విష్ణువు కొరకు ప్రార్థించినారు. అప్పటి వరకు తూర్పు ముఖముగా ఉన్న మూలవిరాట్టు, తన ప్రేయ భక్తుడిని అనుగ్రహించుటకు పశ్చిమమునకు తిరిగి పోయేనట (కర్ణాటక లోని ఉడిపి ఆలయములో వలె). స్వామికి అభిముఖముగా పశ్చిమ దిక్కున ప్రతిష్ఠించబడినదే ఈ రెండవ ధ్వజ (విజయ) స్తంభము.

Second Dwaja Stambha (Flag Post)

His Holiness Sri Raamaanujaachaarya prayed for Lord Vishnu at this place in 11th century. The Deity, facing East till then, turned towards West to bless the Achaarya (like in Udupi Temple , Karnataka). The Second Dwaja Stambha was installed as the Deity is facing West since then.

కృష్ణమే వందే జగద్గురుమే KRUSHNAM VANDE JAGADGURUM

This is the place where Lord Jagannatha at Puri made land up Sripad Ramanujacarya



Lotus Footprints of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu



Lotus Footprints of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu at Sri Kurma Ksetra, established by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura to mark Lord's visit here.

ABOUT SRI KURMAM TEMPLE

THE MOST SACRED AND ANCIENT SHRINE OF SRI KURMAM, SITUATED ON THE SHORES OF BAY OF BENGAL, IS THE ONLY TEMPLE IN THE WORLD WHERE LORD VISHNU IS WORSHIPPED IN THE FORM OF KURMA AVATAARA (Tortoise) – The second Incarnation of the famous Dasa Avataaraas. THIS ANCIENT SHRINE IS BELIEVED TO BE PRIOR TO THE GOLDEN ERA OF SRI RAAMA – Raama Raajyam, PROMINENT REFERENCES ABOUT THIS SHRINE ARE AVAILABLE IN KURMA, VISHNU, BRAHMAANDA PURAANAAS. WHILE THE SHRINE IS SAID TO BE MORE THAN A MILLION YEAR OLD, OUTER STRUCTURES WERE RECONSTRUCTED MANY A TIME – AFTER DILAPIDATION OF PREVIOUS ONE, AND THE LATEST TEMPLE STRUCTURE IS MORE THAN 700 YEARS OLD.

LEGEND SAYS THAT DURING KRITA YUGA, A PIOUS KING - SWETA MAHARAJA, OBSERVED FIERCE PENANCE FOR MANY YEARS. FULFILLING HIS WISH, LORD VISHNU MANIFESTED (Swayambhu) HERE IN THE FORM OF KURMA AVATAAR. LORD BRAHMA, CREATOR OF UNIVERSE, HIMSELF OFFICIATED THE CELESTIAL RITUALS AND CONSECRATED THE DEITY WITH GOPAALA YANTRA (Praana Pratistha). SWETA PUSHKARINI – The Lake in front of the Temple, IS FORMED BY THE SUDARSHAN CHAKRA. SRI MAHAA LAXMI, THE CONSORT OF LORD VISHNU EMANATED FROM THIS LAKE AND IS ADORDED IN THE NAME OF SRI KURMA NAAYAKI, IN VARADAA MUDRA POSTURE SEATED ON GARUDA VAAHANA.

SRI KURMAM SHRINE IS BELIEVED TO BE THE "MOKSHA STHAANAM" AND THE SWETA PUSHKARINI HAS COSMIC CLEANSING POWERS. SO, LIKE IN VARANASI, PEOPLE PERFORM THE LAST RITES OF THE DECEASED AND DROP (Nimajjan) THE ASTHIKAAS (Ashes) IN IT, WHICH EVENTUALLY METAMORPHOSE INTO SAALAGRAAMAAS (Divine Stones) EVEN MOTHER GANGA TAKES A BATH IN THIS LAKE EVERY YEAR ON MAAGHA SHUDHA CHAVITHI (Around February) TO CLEANSE HERSELF OF ALL THE SINS LEFT BY THE DEVOTEES. THE PRASAADAM OF THE LORD IS SAID TO POSSESS MYSTIC CURATIVE POWERS. AFTER TAKING THIS PRASAADAM, THE CELESTIAL DANCER TILOTTAMA RENUNCIATED DESIRES., KING SUBHAANGA WON THE WAR., A DEVOTEE BY NAME VAASU DEVA GOT LEPROSY CURED.

UNLIKE MANY OTHER TEMPLES, THE PRESIDING DEITY HERE IS FACING WEST AND HENCE THERE ARE TWO DWAJA STAMBHAAS (Flag Posts) IN EAST AND WEST DIRECTIONS. THIS IS ALSO THE REASON TO PERMIT DEVOTEES TO ENTER THE GARBHA GRUHA (Sanctum Sanctorum) FOR A CLOSER DARSHAN OF THE LORD. THIS TEMPLE IS KNOWN FOR ITS MARVELLOUS SCULPTURE, PARTICULARLY ON THE SOUTHERN ENTRANCE, APART FROM THE 108 PILARS, WHERE NO SINGLE PILLAR IS SIMILAR TO THE REMAINING, THE UNIQUE STONES ON THE FLOOR IN THE PRADAKSHINA MANDAPAM (Circumambulatory passage) ARE SAID TO INFUSE MAGNETIC ENERGY INTO THE DEVOTEES THROUGH THEIR FEET. THE ANCIENT PICTURES ON THESE WALLS, MADE FROM NATURAL COLOURS, RESEMBLE THOSE IN AJANTA – ELLORA CAVES

Continued.....

KRUSHNAM VANDE JAGADGURUM

కృష్ణమ్ వందే జగద్గురుమ్

Sri Kurma Ksetra

ABOUT SRI KURMAM TEMPLE

Continued.....

MANY GREAT PEOPLE AND HOLY SAGES OFFERED THEIR PRAYERS IN THIS SHRINE INCLUDING, Lava & Kusha (Sons of Sri Raama, Belonging to Treta Yuga - More than a million Years ago) ., Bala Raama (Elder Brother of Sri Krishna, Belonging to Dwaapara Yuga - More than 5000 Years ago) ., Sage Durvasa (More than 5000 Years ago) ., Sri Adi Sankara acharya (8th century AD) ., Sri Raamaanujaacharya (11th century AD) ., Sri Narahari Teerthulu (13th century AD) ., Sri Chaitanya Mahaa Prabhu (1512 AD) Etc. SRI KURMANADHA IS A GREAT BESTOWER OF PEACE & BLISS AND IS SAID TO RELIEVE THE DOSHAS RELATED TO SATURN (Sani Graha Dosha).

TO PROTECT THIS TEMPLE FROM THE FOREIGN INVADERS DURING 14TH - 15TH CENTURIES, LIKE IN MANY TEMPLES IN SOUTH INDIA, THE PRIESTS APPLIED LIME STONE MIX ON THE ENTIRE TEMPLE COMPLEX AND CAMOUFLAGED AS A HILLOCK. THE SOLIDIFIED LIMESTONE LAYERS ARE STILL BEING PEELED OFF NOW, AND THE SAME ARE VISIBLE EVEN TODAY ON THE TEMPLE WALLS. TEMPLES ARE THE PIVOTS OF HINDU CULTURE. MANY OF OUR FORE FATHERS SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES TO PROTECT THESE INVALUABLE TREASURES FOR POSTERITY. WITH ONLY 3 OF THE 29 ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS REMAINING, AND HINDUISM BEING ONE OF THEM, THE PRESENT GENERATION HAS THE INESCAPABLE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT, IF NOT FURTHER DEVELOP, AND PASS ON TO THE NEXT GENERATIONS. AS THE GREAT SAGES SAID "CONSERVE THE NATURE - PRESERVE THE CULTURE - TO DESERVE A FUTURE".

MANY STRAWS WHEN TWINED TOGETHER MAKE A ROPE - MANY DROPS MAKE AN OCEAN, AND YOUR GENEROUS OFFERINGS, HOWEVER SMALL OR BIG, WILL GO A LONG WAY TO SAFEGUARD OUR ANCIENT TEMPLES LIKE SRI KURMAM. KINDLY DONATE BY DROPPING IN THE "HUNDI" OR HAND OVER IN THE OFFICE AGAINST RECEIPT OR YOU MAY ALSO SEND THROUGH MONEY ORDER/DD/CHEQUE IN FAVOUR OF "EXECUTIVE OFFICER - SRI KURMAM DEVASTHANAM" to EO, SRIKURMAM Temple, SRIKURMAM : PIN 532404, SRIKAKULAM Dt, A.P., INDIA

FOR MORE INFORMATION www.srikurmamtemples.com

OM SRI KURMA NAADHAAYA NAMAHA

KRUSHNAM VANDE JAGADGURUM

కృష్ణమ్ వందే జగద్గురమ్

Sri Kurma Ksetra



Group of Tortoise at Kurma Ksetra



Sri Kurmadeva Temple

Kurma-sthana is a well-known place of pilgrimage. There is a temple there of Kurmadeva. In the Prapannamrta it is said that Lord Jagannatha took Sri Ramanujacarya from Jagannatha Puri and one night threw him to Kurma Ksetra. Kurma Ksetra is situated on the line of the Southern Railway in India. One has to go to the railway station known as Srikakulam Road. From this station one goes eight miles to the east to reach the holy place known as Kurmacala. Those who speak the Telugu language consider this holy place very important. This statement is reported in the government gazette known as Ganjama Manual. There is the Deity of Kurma there, and, as mentioned above, Srila Ramanujacarya was thrown from Jagannatha Puri to this place. At that time he thought that the Deity of Kurma was Lord Siva's deity; therefore he was fasting there. Later, when he understood that the kurma-murti was another form of Lord Visnu, he instituted very gorgeous worship of Lord Kurma. This statement is found in the Prapannamrta (chapter thirty-six). The holy place of Kurma Ksetra, or Kurma-sthana, was actually re-established by Sripada Ramanujacarya under the influence of Lord Jagannatha-deva at Jagannatha Puri. Later the temple came under the jurisdiction of the king of Vijaya-nagara. The Deity was worshiped by the Vaisnavas of the Madhvacarya-sampradaya. In the temple there are some inscriptions said to be written by Sri Narahari Tirtha, who was in the disciplic succession of Madhvacarya. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura explains those inscriptions as follows: (1) Sri Purusottama Yati appeared as the instructor of many learned men. He was a very favourite devotee of Lord Visnu. (2) His preaching was accepted throughout the world with great respect, and by his power he liberated many non-devotees with strong reason and logic. (3) He initiated Ananda Tirtha and converted many foolish men to accept sannyasa and punished them with his rod. (4) All his writings and words are very potent. He gave people devotional service to Lord Visnu so they could be elevated to liberation in the spiritual world. (5) His instructions in devotional service were able to elevate any man to the lotus feet of the Lord. (6) Narahari Tirtha was also initiated by him and became the ruler of Kalinga Province. (7) Narahari Tirtha fought with the Sabaras, who were candalas, or hunters, and thus saved the temple of Kurma. (8) Narahari Tirtha was a very religious and powerful king. (9) In the Saka Era 1203, in the month of Vaisakha, in the fortnight of the moon's waxing period, on the day of Ekadasi, Narahari Tirtha dedicated to the holy name of Yogananda Nrsimhadeva the temple he had constructed on His order. [The tablet is dated that very day, corresponding to Saturday, March 29, 1281 A.D.] -- Purport of Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya lila chapter 7 verse 113.

Sri Surya-Narayana Temple, Srikakulam

Sri Surya-Narayana Temple is situated in Arasavalli Village which is at a distance of about 1 km from Srikakulam. This is one of the ancient Temple. According to Padma Purana, Sage Kasyapa installed the deity of Surya at Arasavalli.



Sri Surya-Narayana Temple, Srikakulam



Sri Surya-Narayana Temple, Srikakulam



Sri Surya-Narayana Swamy



Sri Surya-Narayana Temple, Srikakulam



Pushkarni at Sri Surya-Narayana Temple

Lord Caitanya's pastime with leper Vasudeva



When Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu touched the leper Vasudeva, both his leprosy and his distress went far away. Indeed, his body became very beautiful, to his great happiness.

[Ref. Sri Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya-lila Chapter 7, verses 113 to 152]

When Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to the holy place known as Kurma-ksetra, He saw the Deity and offered prayers and obeisances. While at this place, Lord Caitanya was in His usual ecstasy of love of Godhead and was laughing, crying, dancing and chanting. Everyone who saw Him was astonished. After hearing of these wonderful occurrences, everyone came to see Him there. When they saw the beauty of the Lord and His ecstatic condition, they were all struck with wonder. Just by seeing Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, everyone became a devotee. They began to chant "Krishna" and "Hari" and all the holy names. They all were merged in a great ecstasy of love, and they began to dance, raising their arms. Always hearing them chant the holy names of Lord Krishna, the residents of all the other villages also became Vaisnavas. By hearing the holy name of Krishna, the entire country became Vaisnava. It was as if the nectar of the holy name of Krishna over-flooded the entire country. After some time, when Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu manifested His external consciousness, a priest of the Lord Kurma Deity gave Him various offerings. In whichever village the Lord entered, His behaviour was the same.

In one village there was a Vedic brahmana named Kurma. He invited Lord Caitanya to his home with great respect and devotion. This brahmana brought Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu to his home, washed His lotus feet and, with his family members, drank that water. With great affection and respect, that Kurma brahmana made Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu eat all kinds of food. After that, the remnants were shared by all the members of the family. The brahmana then began to pray, "O my Lord, Your lotus feet are meditated upon by Lord Brahma, and these very lotus feet have come into my home. My dear Lord, there is no limit to my great fortune. It cannot be described. Today my family, birth and riches have

all been glorified." The brahmana begged Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, "My dear Lord, kindly show me favour and let me go with You. I can no longer tolerate the waves of misery caused by materialistic life." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied, "Don't speak like that again. Better to remain at home and chant the holy name of Krishna always. Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krishna as they are given in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu further advised the brahmana Kurma, "If you follow this instruction, your materialistic life at home will not obstruct your spiritual advancement. Indeed, if you follow these regulative principles, we will again meet here, or, rather, you will never lose My company."

At whosever house Sri Caitanya accepted His alms by taking *prasadam*, He would convert the dwellers to His *sankirtana* movement and advise them just as He advised the brahmana named Kurma. While on His tour, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would spend the night at a temple by the road. Whenever He accepted food from a person, He would give him the same advice He gave the brahmana named Kurma. He adopted this process until He returned to Jagannatha Puri from His South Indian tour. Thus Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would remain at night in one place, and the next morning, after bathing, He would start again. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu left, the brahmana Kurma followed Him a great distance, but eventually Lord Caitanya took care to send him back home.

There was also a brahmana named Vasudeva, who was a great person but was suffering from leprosy. Indeed, his body was filled with living worms. Although suffering from leprosy, the brahmana Vasudeva was enlightened. As soon as one worm fell from his body, he would pick it up and place it back again in the same location. Then one night Vasudeva heard of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's arrival, and in the morning he came to see the Lord at the house of Kurma. When the leper Vasudeva came to Kurma's house to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he was informed that the Lord had already left. The leper then fell to the ground unconscious. When Vasudeva, the leper brahmana, was lamenting due to not being able to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Lord immediately returned to that spot and embraced him. When Sri Caitanya touched him, both the leprosy and his distress went to a distant place. Indeed, Vasudeva's body became very beautiful, to his great happiness. The brahmana Vasudeva was astonished to behold the wonderful mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and he began to recite a verse from *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, touching the Lord's lotus feet.

He said, "*Who am I? A sinful, poor friend of a brahmana. And who is Krishna? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in six opulences. Nonetheless, He has embraced me with His two arms.*" (This verse was spoken by Sudama Brahmana in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (10.81.16), in connection with his meeting Lord Krishna.) The brahmana Vasudeva continued, "O my merciful Lord, such mercy is not possible for ordinary living entities. Such mercy can be found only in You. Upon seeing me, even a sinful person goes away due to my bad bodily odour. Yet You have touched me. Such is the independent behaviour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Being meek and humble, the *brahmana* Vasudeva worried that he would become proud after being cured by the grace of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. To protect the brahmana, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised him to chant the Hare Krishna mantra incessantly. By doing so, he would never become unnecessarily proud. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu also advised Vasudeva to preach about Krishna and thus liberate living entities. As a result, Krishna would very soon accept him as His devotee. After instructing the brahmana Vasudeva in that way, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu disappeared from that place. Then the two *brahmanas*, Kurma and Vasudeva, embraced each other and began to cry, remembering the transcendental qualities of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus I have described how Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu reclaimed the leper Vasudeva and so received the name *Vasudevamrta-prada*. One who hears these

pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu with great faith will surely very soon attain the lotus feet of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Directions to reach Sri Kurma Ksetra:

Sri Kurmam is situated on the shores of Bay of Bengal, is easily accessible by Road, Rail and Air. It is 13 Km from the district Headquarters town of Srikakulam, which is conveniently located on the NH 5 from Chennai to Kolkata. Visakhapatnam is 110 Km from the Temple. Nearest Railway Station is called Srikakulam Road which is on Chennai Kolkata route and most trains have halt here. Regular city Buses/Auto Rickshaws/Taxis are available. Visakhapatnam Airport is the nearest. Many domestic and international flights connect Visakhapatnam.

Lord's appearance as Kurma Avatar (Srimad-Bhagavatam Canto 8 chapter 5 to 8):

www.vedabase.com/en/sb/8/5

Rajahmundry Yatra: www.dandavats.com/?p=12588

ISKCON Vishakhapatnam: <http://www.iskconvizag.org/>

ISKCON Rajahmundry: www.iskconrajahmundry.com

ISKCON Tirupati: <http://www.iskcontirupati.net/main/home.html>

ISKCON Guntur: <http://iskconkondaveedu.com>

Mayapur TV: <http://Mayapur.tv> / **Vrindavana TV:** <http://Vrindavana.tv>

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